

Developing Sense of Self

[\(IAC Models - Overview & Index\)](#)

How does my identity and values impact my thoughts and actions?

The following set of activities helps students explore the complex intersection of students' identity, social and personal values, and worldview as they build a deeper understanding of themselves as individuals influenced by, and engaging with, a complex society. These do not sit directly within either the first or second bubble, but instead are a part of the overarching process of working with students and building a trusting classroom community.

Beyond self introspection, these activities help students understand the origins and impact of belief systems that others hold, leading to the realization that everyone operates from an ideology, conscious or not, that explains their position in the world - that there is no such thing as political neutrality.

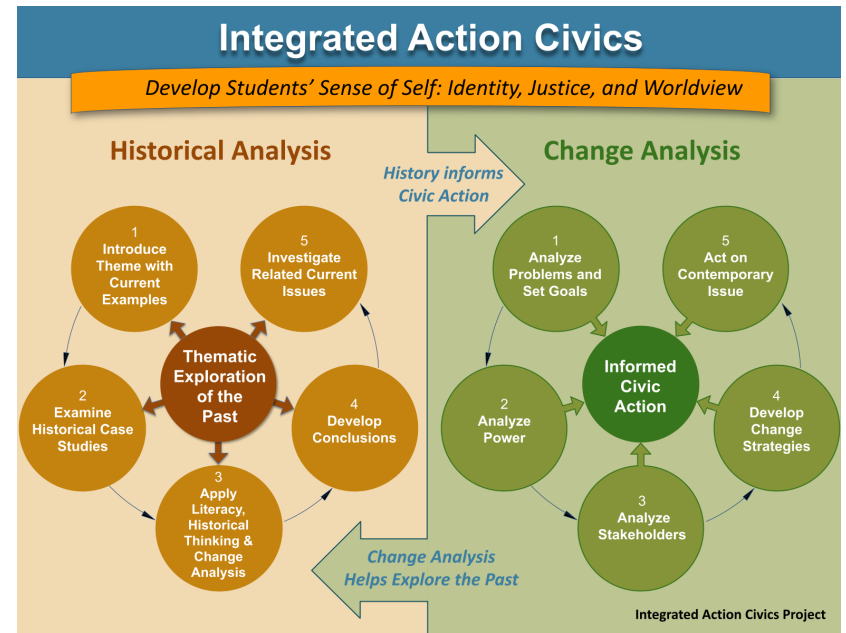
Developing Sense of Self - Models:

- [Empowerment Framework](#) - What does an empowered student look like?
- [Values Inventory](#) - What do I believe? What do I value?
- [\(Community Wealth](#) - What strength do I draw from my family, community and culture?)
- [Worldview](#) - How did I come to view the world as I do? How does one's worldview influence one's thoughts and actions?
- [Visioning a Just Society](#) - What would be the characteristics of a truly just society? How does that compare to ours?
- [Three Kinds of Citizens](#) - What is my view of civic engagement? What is my approach to civic responsibility?

Exploring Sense of Self:

- Introducing the concepts
- Notes from teacher experience

References



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FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

Students are Empowered to...	Students individually and collaboratively ...	Tools / Skills
Clarify Sense of Self and Others	<i>articulate and reflect upon their identity, sense of justice, and the origins of their evolving worldview, and understand how worldview and identity impact people's beliefs, values, stances, choices and actions.</i>	World View Visioning Justice , Explore Identity Structured Academic Conversations Compare authors' arguments
Understand Context	<i>observe how people's lives and experiences connect with historical and contemporary issues, events and conditions. Students understand how these are shaped by the broader political, economic and social context of the time, which in turn share characteristics and thematic connections with, and are influenced by, events of the past</i>	Current Context-based study of historical and current events Worldview and context
Investigate	<i>ask meaningful questions, and use evidence and historical analysis to identify, contextualize and understand contemporary and past societal issues, problems and the movements for justice that address these.</i>	Historical Thinking skills (Significance, Evidence, Continuity & Change, etc.) 2nd Bubble models to explore content
Evaluate	<i>explore and weigh multiple perspectives, competing analysis and claims to clarify their connection with, positions on, and solutions for, societal issues and problems both past and present.</i>	Structured Academic Conversations, Deliberative Discourse, Ethical Dimension
Strategize	<i>apply models of civic engagement in order to identify and evaluate viable action goals, and apply their understanding to analyze and develop change strategies that can positively impact their communities, local and global.</i>	Second Bubble: Root Cause, Power & Stakeholder Analysis, Strategize
Engage & Persist	<i>make choices and take meaningful action in order to advocate on their own and other's behalf for justice, informed by historical and contemporary analysis, utilizing the tools of civic engagement.</i>	Second bubble: "Take Action"

Empowerment Framework

What does it mean to empower students? While clarifying their sense of self and others, students understand context as they investigate and evaluate historical and contemporary problems and solutions. Students strategize, engage and persist in making change. This is a framework for language, self-guided reflection and feedback that reframes the goals of education in terms of fostering student agency and power.

The chart is not meant to suggest a linear or hierarchical progression. Students can demonstrate empowerment in some realms while still developing their capacities in others. However, the ability to engage in, and move between, the full array of categories is key to maximizing student agency, efficacy and power.

This Framework is useful for student self-reflection as well as [teacher unit planning](#)

[Framework for Empowerment](#) | [Student "Empowerment Self-Reflection"](#)



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Personal Values Checklist

Values are important traits that explain your actions, explain your emotions, explain how you want to be seen by others, and even explain the kinds of people you look up to. Color the Top 10 Values = **Background color green**

Faith: This could be religious faith or the ability to always believe that everything will be okay. You admire people of faith or people who seem to always keep the faith.	Fame: You desire to be famous or popular. You admire people who are famous or popular.	Honesty: You want to be seen as someone who always tells the truth. You admire people who always tell the truth.
Knowledge: You want to be knowledgeable. You look up information, read, and try to find out more information about topics. You admire people who knowledgeable	Change: You enjoy growth, new experiences, and hate when things always stay the same. You admire people who create change in the world or in their lives.	Pleasure: You enjoy packing your day with fun activities or doing things that make you happy. You admire people who prioritize fun.
Privacy: You enjoy having your own space, keeping your business to yourself, and hate when people don't respect that. You admire people who can maintain a private life.	Freedom: You enjoy having choice and independence to do the things you want to do. You admire people who live freely and don't seem to care what other people think.	Creativity: You enjoy creating, the arts, and thinking outside the box. To not be creative might feel suffocating. You admire people who are artistic or come up with new ways of doing things.
Adventure: You enjoy doing new things, going to places, and taking risks. You never want to stay in your comfort zone. You admire people who always explore.	Independence: You enjoy doing things on your own and being able to take care of yourself. You admire people who show you they can take care of themselves.	Family: Family is important to you. You admire people who put their family first.
Democracy: You enjoy using your voice, caring about social issues, voting, and equality. You admire people who speak out on important topics.	Community: You enjoy being a part of a community and belonging to a group of people. You admire people who stand up for their community and help it.	Physical Strength: You want to be seen as strong, competitive, and athletic. You admire athletes and people who push the boundaries of the human body.

Values Inventory

What values guide us as we navigate our world? This activity guides students through a list of possible values and asks them to narrow their most closely held values down to a list of three. Followup questions help them contemplate their choice and reflect on the process.

The list includes personal qualities as well as social and communal values. It can help students think about the meaning of family, community and society. This is a useful activity to help students clarify their values before they proceed to exploring the nature, origins and significance of their worldview in the next activity.

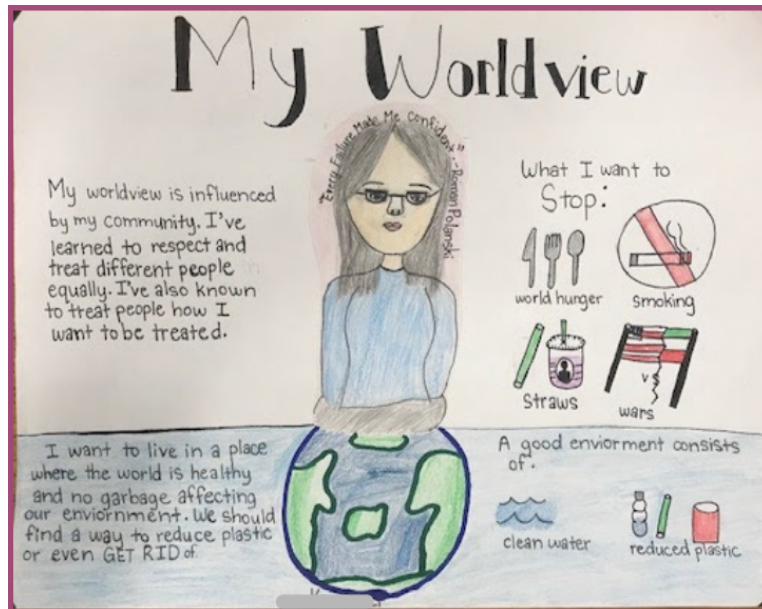
[Values Inventory \(w/Descriptors\)](#) | [Values Inventory \(List only\)](#)



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Worldview

How do we make sense of the world and our relationship to it? Our worldview shapes our thoughts, opinions and actions. It both contributes to, and is impacted by, one's identity and position in society, and influences how we move through the world.

An introspection and reflection of our own worldview helps us be more self-aware as well as better understand how and why other people do what they do. It is key to grappling with different perspectives, uncovering implicit judgement, developing empathy, and understanding the ethical dimension of contemporary issues and historical events.

Self Introspection and Community Building: *Who am I and why do I believe what I do? Who are my peers with whom I learn, have difficult conversations, and grow.* The worldview activity is an excellent way to start laying the groundwork for students to work and collaborate as change-makers, aware and respectful of themselves and each other.

Application to Course Content: An understanding of worldview helps students identify authors' implicit arguments. See "[Interrogate the Source](#)" activity.

[Instructions \(alt\)](#) | [Student Responses](#) | [Student Posters](#) | [The Power of Narratives \(JASS\)](#)



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Group 2 In a just society.....

But in our society, which concepts are:
 Foundational In Principle Only Not a Value

Essential	Desirable	Icing on the Cake
Health care is available for all	people don't work all the time	Health care is free
all children will get to go to school	our political representative reflect us all	people can engage in many different types of community
people have determination over their own bodies	we understand our relationship to the national world	we can go places we want to go
there's no inequality based on race	there would be a minimal income gap	people have opportunity to do the things they are passionate about
we can speak our mind without consequences	people know and trust their neighbors	
a basic shared standard of living for all	our representatives care about the common good	
	there is time to play	
	people have everything they need	

history-social science PROJECT

Visioning a Just Society.

What is a just society? Social change requires a shared vision of an alternative. Too often, though, we are trapped by the belief that the world that we experience is fixed. This activity is designed to help students generate and reflect upon an expansive, unlimited visioning of a world in which they would want to live.

The activity builds on the broad concept of justice that underpins societies' definitions of 'rights', 'freedom' and 'liberty'. Not limited to political or legal systems, it defines economic, environmental and social relations and practices. This activity inspires creative thinking about justice by asking students to complete the sentence: *"In a just society, ..."*.

Application to Course Content: Students can use class-developed ideas of justice to examine past events, policies and action. See [Justice - Principles & Criteria](#)

[Template w/ Examples](#) | [Student Work Sample](#), Reflection, Content Application,

Three Kinds of Citizens

	Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Justice-oriented Citizen
Description	- Acts responsibly in his/her community - Works and pays taxes - Obey laws - Recycles, gives blood - Volunteers to lend a hand in times of crisis	- Active member of community organizations and/or improvement efforts - Organize community efforts to care for those in need, promote economic development, and clean up environment - Knows how government agencies work - Knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks	- Critically assesses social, political and economic structures to see beyond surface causes - Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice - Knows about social movements and how to effect systemic change
Action Sample	Contributes food to a food drive	Helps to organize a food drive	Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes
Core Assumptions	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have honest, responsible, and law abiding members of the community.	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures.	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time.

Source: [Educating the Good Citizen](#) - Joel Westheimer & Joseph Kahne

Three Kinds of Citizens

What does it mean to be civically engaged? What are our responsibilities toward improving our society? This activity encourages students to consider and reflect on a range of possible approaches to the questions.

Students study a chart from [Educating the Good Citizen](#), (Westheimer & Kahne), examine their previous actions from these lenses, evaluate the benefits and limitations of each approach, and end by articulating their own view of civic responsibility and engagement.

It is important to be clear that the word 'citizen' refers to a member of a community and not a legal status.

[Student Reflection Activity](#)



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References:

- Peter Seixas, [The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts](#)
- Sarah Longwe, Zambian gender specialist, *Women's Empowerment Framework* from VeneKlasen and Miller's [A New Weave of Power](#)
- Martell & Stevens, (2021), [Teaching History for Justice: Centering Activism in Students' Study of the Past](#). Teachers College Press
- Westheimer & Kahne (2004), [Educating the Good Citizen](#)
- JASS (n.d.), [The Power of Narratives](#)



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